

no one doubt that the lives of American soldiers and Iraqi civilians hang in the balance.

This is a vote of conscience and one of the most important votes I will ever cast in the House of Representatives.

I wish we were debating the language of the 1970 McGovern-Hatfield amendment. It called for directing funds only for the safe and orderly withdrawal of U.S. troops from Indochina. I enter into the RECORD at this point the Iraq version of the McGovern-Hatfield that I want to offer.

PROPOSED McDERMOTT AMENDMENT TO H.R. 1591, MODELED ON MCGOVERN-HATFIELD

After April 30, 2007, funds herein appropriated may be expended in connection with the activities of American Armed Forces in or over Iraq, Iran or Syria bordering Iraq only to accomplish the following objectives:

(1) the orderly termination of military operations and the safe and systematic withdrawal of remaining armed forces by December 31, 2007 and

(2) provision of humanitarian and reconstruction assistance to the people of Iraq.

SENATOR GEORGE MCGOVERN'S SPEECH IN FAVOR OF THE MCGOVERN-HATFIELD AMENDMENT, SEPTEMBER 1, 1970:

"Every senator in this chamber is partly responsible for sending 50,000 young Americans to an early grave. This chamber reeks of blood. Every Senator here is partly responsible for that human wreckage at Walter Reed and Bethesda Naval and all across our land—young men without legs, or arms, or genitals, or faces or hopes."

"There are not very many of these blasted and broken boys who think this war is a glorious adventure. Do not talk to them about bugging out, or national honor or courage. It does not take any courage at all for a congressman, or a senator, or a president to wrap himself in the flag and say we are staying in Vietnam, because it is not our blood that is being shed. But we are responsible for those young men and their lives and their hopes."

"And if we do not end this damnable war those young men will some day curse us for our pitiful willingness to let the Executive carry the burden that the Constitution places on us."

"So before we vote, let us ponder the admonition of Edmund Burke, the great parliamentarian of an earlier day: 'A contentious man would be cautious how he dealt in blood.'"

I wish the legislation before us was that direct, but we do have legislation before us and a momentous decision to make.

Over 4 years ago, a vote in this House enabled this President to take America to war. Earlier today I told Speaker PELOSI that I will cast my vote to bring America home to peace. I want to get all of the soldiers out of Iraq tomorrow, but safely extracting over 140,000 U.S. troops cannot be done overnight, and the safety of our soldiers in leaving Iraq must be paramount.

I want to end this incomprehensible war tomorrow, but as a medical doctor, I know that no matter what we do today, this war will go on for decades in the minds of psychologically wounded soldiers and in the bodies of severely injured soldiers.

What we have before us today is a first step, and despite my serious mis-

givings about it, it is a step in the right direction, which is out of Iraq.

Speaker PELOSI has given America a plan, a timetable and a course of action demonstrating the leadership we have not seen from the President on Iraq. The President has lost the trust of the American people, and he deepens the mistrust at home and around the world every time he speaks about Iraq.

Instead of confronting reality, the President stubbornly adheres to a fiction of his own creation that a military victory will be achieved in a nation in the throes of a full-scale civil war, with an American presence inciting unspeakable violence against our soldiers from all sides.

The Iraqi people have seen their lives sink into misery. Millions have fled their country or been displaced from their homes. Those remaining live in terror that a trip to the market will end their life, and very often it does.

The Iraqi people want us out because they see the U.S. as an occupier. They want the U.S. out because it is their country and their oil, not ours.

This war should never have started, and Americans at the end of the 21st century will still be paying for this Presidential misadventure.

Preying on the fears of the American people, this President devised a war-first policy, unheard of in American history. The President implemented his chilling foreign policy in Iraq. When just cause for a war did not exist, the administration made it up, preying on America's vulnerabilities after 9/11.

They called it a war against terror, but now we know it was a war of revenge and a war to control oil. It was never about exporting democracy. It was always about exploiting the fears of the American people to do what the White House had been planning long before 9/11: Invade Iraq, control its government, and enable foreign oil companies to reap a bonanza of profits by extracting Iraq oil and perpetuating America's addiction to oil.

Speaker PELOSI has given us a plan, not as strong as I want, but one I will support as a bare minimum because it has a timetable and demands accountability from Iraq leaders; bare minimum, but dramatically better than what we have, a war without end from a President incapable of only escalation, not negotiation.

The heroes of our Nation, the soldiers fighting and dying on the front lines, deserve to come home. The Iraq people deserve to decide the future of their own country.

With this legislation, we acknowledge the wisdom and the will of the American people. We realize that the Iraq war is a fraud, and perpetuating it by sacrificing more innocent U.S. and Iraq lives is a tragedy we can no longer tolerate.

I urge my colleagues to vote with Speaker PELOSI and vote for peace.

□ 1930

GREEK INDEPENDENCE DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, today I proudly rise to celebrate a remarkable anniversary, that which marks a day of Greek independence which took place 186 years ago on March 25. It is also a celebration which recognizes the strong ties that bind together the United States of America and Greece.

What a blessing to be able to straddle two brilliant cultures that have been the beacon of liberty and justice for humankind. Nothing makes me prouder than to call myself American, for it was the United States that welcomed my grandparents and allowed them to bring their morals, their values, their faith, their rich ethnic traditions and work ethic to this great land of opportunity and freedom.

God, indeed, shed his grace on America, as he has on Greece, the prototype for the democratic republic that became the United States. Imagine, what a curious notion it may have seemed thousands of years ago when the ancient Greeks put forth the idea, a man being able to engage in self-rule. The originality of ideas articulated by Plato, Socrates, and all the great thinkers of ancient Greece served as an inspiration to America's colonial leaders like Jefferson, Washington, Madison, and Hamilton.

It is the American revolution in turn that likely served as an inspiration for the Greeks that were suffocating under the Ottoman rule. 186 years ago the people began a journey that would mark the symbolic rebirth of democracy in the land where those principles to human decency were first espoused.

March 25, 1821, is a historic day for all people who treasure freedom. Greece rose up in arms, fought brilliantly and finally overthrew the Ottoman rule, showing the world their deep and abiding commitment to democracy. The flag of revolt was raised by Bishop Germanos of Patras. Cries of Zito I Ellas, "Long Live Greece," and Elefteria I Thanatos, "Liberty or Death," could be heard from the mountains of Suli to the shores of Crete.

In fact, the bravery of the Suliotes demonstrated that acts of courage were not limited to the men of Greece. The fierce patriotic villagers of Suli fought the Ottomans in several battles. News of their victories spread to nearby villages and inspired others to revolt. When the women, who were left alone, learned the Ottoman troops were approaching their village, they began dancing the Syrtos, which we still do today, a patriotic Greek dance. One by one with the children in arms, the Suliote women sacrificed themselves for the cause of liberty. They chose death rather than oppression.

Stories of sacrifice like that of the Suliotes are plentiful. These actions, as

well as the exploits and victories of the Greek Navy under Miaoulis, Kanaris, Bubulina, and Kolokotronis inspired the people of Europe, who finally brought pressure upon their governments to intervene in the fighting and compel the Sultan to recognize Greek independence, which finally secured the Treaty of Adrianople in 1829.

We commemorate Independence Day each year for the same reasons we celebrate our 4th of July. It proved that a united people through sheer will and perseverance can prevail against tyranny. Both of our nations share an illustrious history in defense of this cherished ideal. Both countries have shared a common commitment to the principles of equality and freedom. In many ways, the American experiment might not have been possible without the Greek experience.

Indeed, as Thomas Jefferson noted: "To the ancient Greeks we are all indebted for the light which led ourselves, American colonists, out of the Gothic darkness." Democracy and freedom are the guiding beliefs that give hope to millions around the world.

Remembering the sacrifice of the brave Greeks who gave their lives for the cause of liberty helps us all realize how important it is to be an active participant in our own democracy.

As Plato noted: "The penalty good men pay for indifference to public affairs is to be ruled by evil men." Greeks, like Americans, have never been indifferent to the welfare of mankind. We share a belief that citizens must be engaged in governmental affairs and must work to promote liberty and justice throughout the world. That is why we honor those who secured independence for Greece nearly two centuries ago. Let us always remember their commitment to freedom. God bless America and Zito I Ellas.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. JONES of North Carolina addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. SCHIFF) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. SCHIFF addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

H. RES. 106 AND THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF GENOCIDE SCHOLARS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I want to urge my colleagues this evening to support House Resolution 106, a resolu-

tion that reaffirms the Armenian genocide.

I also wish to express my support for its swift passage in the House of Representatives. As the first genocide of the 20th century, it is morally imperative that we remember this atrocity and collectively demand reaffirmation of this crime against humanity.

The resolution, which I introduced with Representatives SCHIFF, RADANOVICH and KNOLLENBERG, has over 180 co-sponsors. It's also the exact same resolution that passed the International Affairs Committee last Congress by an overwhelming majority.

I strongly believe it is important for Members to understand that this is a matter of historical fact. Many Turkish deniers have been meeting with Members of Congress and sending correspondence, discouraging this resolution. They are claiming that passage of such a resolution would be untimely and counterproductive.

Mr. Speaker, for 92 years this has not been reaffirmed here in this Congress. I think 92 years is far too long for a proper recognition to be made, and its reaffirmation is a matter of conscience.

In the meantime, the Turkish Government has threatened to close supply routes to U.S. troops in Iraq if this resolution is considered. It's appalling that a country who claims to be our ally would put the lives of soldiers at risk in the pursuit of its desperate campaign to deny the systematic slaughter of 1.5 million Armenians.

The highly reputable International Association of Genocide Scholars recently wrote to Members of Congress urging support for the Armenian genocide resolution, and I request permission to insert their letter in the RECORD.

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF GENOCIDE SCHOLARS March 7, 2007.

DEAR MEMBERS OF THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS: We write to you as the international organization of scholars who study genocide. We strongly urge you to co-sponsor H. Res. 106, the House Resolution recognizing and commemorating the Armenian Genocide.

In three previous statements of the International Association of Genocide Scholars—first, a unanimous resolution declaring that the Turkish massacres of Armenians in 1915–1918 constituted genocide; second, an Open Letter to Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan calling upon him to acknowledge the Armenian Genocide; and third, an Open Letter concerning scholars who deny the Armenian Genocide—we have made our position clear: the historical record on the Armenian Genocide is unambiguous and documented by overwhelming evidence. It is proven by foreign office records of the United States, France, Great Britain, Russia, and perhaps most importantly, of Turkey's World War I allies, Germany and Austria-Hungary, as well as by the records of the Ottoman Courts-Martial of 1918–1920, and by decades of scholarship.

We believe it is important for Members of Congress to understand that Turkey's nine-decade-long campaign to deny the facts of the Armenian Genocide is driven by a government that has yet to engage in the honest historical self-critique that is a vital part of

the democratic process. The numerous trials and imprisonments of Turkish intellectuals and journalists and the assassination of the Armenian-Turkish journalist Hrant Dink in January make this clear. It should be noted that there are Turkish scholars who are urging their government to acknowledge the Armenian Genocide, and many parts of Turkish society share this pro-democratic perspective. We would note, however, that a government that still encourages extreme, uncritical nationalism has created a false narrative about the Armenian Genocide in order to absolve its predecessors of responsibility for the extermination of the Armenian people and their culture in the Ottoman Empire in 1915.

We are aware that you may be pressured by a small number of academics who support Turkey's denialist stance for often self-interested reasons. Such academics willingly falsify, distort, and manipulate the evidence in sometimes subtle ways to present a false view of history. These academics violate the ethical obligations of historical scholarship. We have noted that academics who deny the Armenian Genocide are no different than academics who deny the Holocaust, the Rwandan Genocide, or the Cambodian Genocide. The recent conference in Teheran devoted to Holocaust denial is a case in point. "Where scholars deny genocide in the face of decisive evidence . . . they contribute to false consciousness that can have the most dire reverberations. Their message, in effect, is . . . mass murder requires no confrontation, but should be ignored, glossed over. In this way scholars lend their considerable authority to the acceptance of this ultimate crime" (Roger Smith, Eric Markusen, Robert Jay Lifton "Professional Ethics and the Denial of the Armenian Genocide," *Journal of Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, vol. 9, Spring, 1995).

We urge you to reject the Turkish campaign of denial, as you may be meeting with groups and individuals who are ardent deniers. We would underscore that the Armenian Genocide is not controversial, but rather is denied only by the Turkish government and its apologists.

We urge you to pass H. Res. 106:

(1) It is a recognition of an historical turning point in the twentieth century, the event that inaugurated the era of modern genocide. In spite of its importance, the Armenian Genocide has gone unrecognized until recently, and warrants a symbolic act of moral commemoration. The Armenian-American community first arrived in the United States as refugees and survivors of this great catastrophe and of earlier massacres in the late 19th century.

(2) Congress will honor America's extraordinary foreign service officers (among them Leslie A. Davis, Jesse B. Jackson, Oscar Heizer, and Ambassador Henry Morgenthau) who often risked their lives rescuing Armenian citizens in 1915. These courageous American diplomats left behind some 4,000 reports totaling 37,000 pages, now in the National Archives, documents that prove the Armenian mass murders were government-planned, systematic extermination—what Raphael Lemkin named genocide. By this resolution the U.S. Congress would demonstrate that the moral principles and courage of those foreign service officers continues to represent a powerful example of American leadership. It is in the interest of the United States to support the principles of human rights that are at the core of American democracy.

(3) Inasmuch as the popular effort in the United States to rescue and bring relief to the Armenians, first from massacres in the 1890s and then from genocide in 1915, set the